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Chief, St/I/R

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ATTN
THRU

Chief, Industrial Division
Acting Chief, Consumer Industries Branch

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I/CI Evaluation of Moscow Embassy Field Trip Reports Since
1 January 1956.

1. The information of primary value to I/CI which is obtained through Moscow embassy field trip consists of high quality reports of the prices and availabilities of consumer goods and services prevailing in the geographic areas covered by the trips.

2. Information on the prices and availabilities of Soviet consumer goods is essential to the performance of I/CI's mission and is used to evaluate Soviet living standards.

3. While price and availability information from Moscow has been relied upon largely in the past, indicated regional variations have necessitated some dependence upon non-Moscow price information. The current reorganization underway in the USSR probably will increase this dependence on non-Moscow prices.

4. Non-Moscow price information also is available from other sources, including defectors and returnees. In general, however, the latter type of reporting tends to be inferior to embassy reporting in respect to coverage, accuracy, and detail and can be used only with caution.

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